

# Alternative Information Record

**AIRMAIL**

We apologise for the delay between AIRs 5 & 6, due to the hectic schedules of those involved and all manner of interruptions. We hope to resume normal service from now on.

Correspondence has included new subscriptions, renewals, plus letters from the UK, US, Sri Lanka, Norway, Japan, South Africa, Canada, etc. We are very pleased that the Commonweal Library, the Rainbow Centre in Nottingham, and TREAT, the Trust for Research and Education on the Arms Trade associated with Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) have written pieces for this issue. We are also very pleased that LIWO (see AIR 5 and the Progressive Librarian piece below) wrote to us from South Africa about AIR to say that "the LIWO Committee is very impressed with it".

**JULY**

**1991**

Promotion of AIR and Librarians Within the Peace Movement (LWPM) continues. In Brighton in June, Declan McHugh spoke at the National Conference of Peace, One World and Environment Centres on the subject of Networking and AIR. He also wrote pieces for the summer issues of Reconciliation Quarterly and the Teachers for Peace newsletter.

Did anyone spot the piece in June's 'New Library World' by Wilfred Ashworth which disapproved of AIR because it was so-called 'political'. We intend to respond, and will reproduce our response here, but our first concern has been to get this issue out.

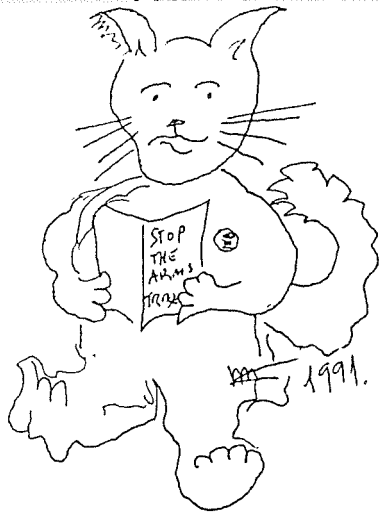
AIR 7 will feature peace resources on Ireland. We are still trying to get more people involved in the work of AIR, especially people who live or work in London, so we can spread the workload and improve the newsletter. Any offers? Also, any Donations? Our cash reserves are very low.



IN THE DEFENSE OF FREEDOM AND LITERACY LIBRARIES ARE THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPONS WE HAVE. TEACH CHILDREN HOW TO USE THEM CORRECTLY.

**THE PROGRESSIVE LIBRARIAN**

Dedicated to the preservation of knowledge and ideas, the Librarian fights the increasing battle against profit, censorship, the destruction of books and budget cuts.

CAAT

The Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) is one of the more specialist peace movement campaigning organisations. Founded in 1973, CAAT's expertise on the merchants of death is second to none. CAAT has produced a four-page list of "Campaign Materials and Publications." The list includes leaflets, posters, an exhibition entitled "Trading in Misery", postcards, stickers, and badges. Briefings produced and researched by CAAT include "Major British arms sales", "Arms conversion", and others concerning the arms trade in the Gulf region. The most important work published by CAAT is "The Arms Traders". This is a register of major British arms traders, including a listing by county, which makes it a very useful directory for local peace activists.

The publications list also contains various factsheets, pamphlets, books and other materials concerned with the arms trade which are intended primarily as campaigning tools. These include a "classroom pack", an introductory leaflet published in Welsh, and a guide to writing letters to the press.

CAAT can be contacted at 11 Goodwin Street, London N4.  
Tel. 071-281 0297.

Martyn Lowe

The Trust for Research and Education on the Arms Trade (TREAT) is a new charity associated with the Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT). TREAT's objectives are to promote research into the international arms trade and its effects, and to disseminate the results of such research. It produces factual articles for the CAAT newsletter and other journals, and comprehensive Briefing Papers on a variety of subjects relating to the arms trade.

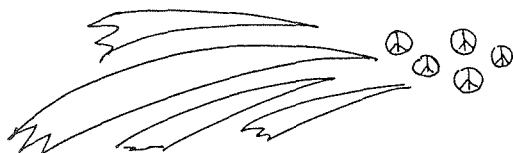
TREAT also compiles resource materials on the arms trade; this information is collated into a filing system which is open to the press and the public. The files date back to 1974, and include information on British exporting companies, individual countries and regions, and related issues such as the conversion of military industry into civilian production. A library of reference materials is also available for use.

The third aspect of TREAT's work is educational. At present this involves providing schools and other educational establishments with resources and speakers. In relation to providing resources, TREAT also asks to be kept informed of any academic work being undertaken in relation to the arms trade.

TREAT can be contacted at the same address as CAAT: 11 Goodwin Street, London N4 3NQ.  
Tel. 071-281 0279

Stephanie Korey, TREAT  
Information Worker

## Nottingham Rainbow



Our vegetarian and animal rights collective has flourished, but our shop, which sold peace goods and items from the Third World, had to close. With the growing interest in "green" issues, recyclers beat a path to our door, laden with paper, newspapers, cardboard, aluminium cans, bottles, - convinced that they were helping to save the world. Now, hopefully, if we go to the right meetings, we can convert our Council to environmentalism, and we have a local branch of Friends of the Earth.

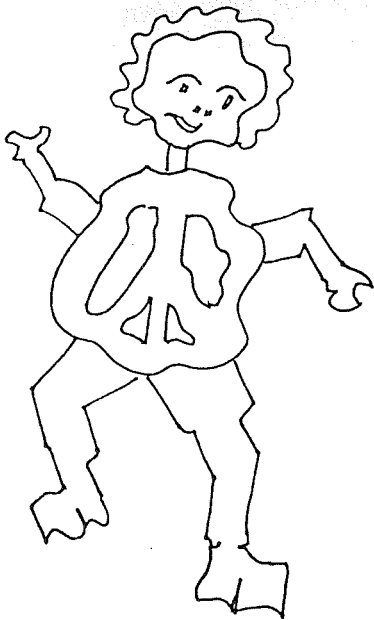
We hope that AIR might encourage our enquirers to look in the local library first. If every library had a copy of "Who's Who in the Environment" by Peter Berry, price £2.50, it would greatly help these seekers after truth.

The Rainbow Centre can be contacted at 180 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG3 5DG  
Tel. 0602 585666

Marjorie Brown, The Rainbow Centre

The Rainbow Centre in Nottingham was originally a Peace Centre with a library, recycling facilities, meeting rooms, a shop, and a vegetarian food collective, "Veggies". With the "Peace Dividend", we concentrated more and more on our work in environmental education. Since we took over the work of the Environmental Factshop next door, this seemed a logical move.

Students in Further Education Colleges, in Polytechnics and Universities, and school children are convinced there must be some answers to the problems of the environment. In order to help them, we try to update our files and our library, and to answer their letters promptly. After all, the Atomic Energy Authority is probably sending them, free of charge, plenty of nuclear waste, in the form of misinformaion about Sellafield. Sometimes our resources fail. A schoolgirl in Cornwall wanted us to send her "everything you've got on the environment", all without a return stamp. (We have no funding.) We now insist on return postage, at least.



Until now, the main users of the collection have been students from Bradford University's Peace Studies course and a small number of external readers, mainly from West Yorkshire- all people who are able to visit the library in person. However, there are now plans to make complete listings of the library's holdings available to a wider public. This will be achieved by using a soon-to-be-available database facility on the Green-Net electronic mail system, so that people with access to Green-Net will be able to gain information about the holdings of the Commonweal Collection from anywhere in the country, and then request items through the inter-library loans system. It is not yet clear when this will be achieved, so watch AIR for further details.

The Commonweal Collection is an independent library of books and journals concerned with non-violence and social change. Although it is housed in the University of Bradford, any member of the public may have a reader's ticket for the collection and its books are available through the inter-library loan system.

With subject areas including the complete works of Gandhi, non-violent direct action, disarmament, alternative education and ecology, plus back issues of more than 100 journals, the collection is a great resource for the peace movement, activists and researchers. For example, the archive section includes a fascinating file of correspondence and information about the origins of the peace/CND symbol.

A graphic exhibition about Commonweal and its purpose, suitable for library foyers, etc., is available for loan by arrangement. For information about this or any other aspect of Commonweal's work, contact the Co-ordinator of the Commonweal Collection, c/o J.B. Priestley Library, University of Bradford, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD7 1DP. Tel. 0274 733466

Steve Graham, Commonweal Collection

# INFO International

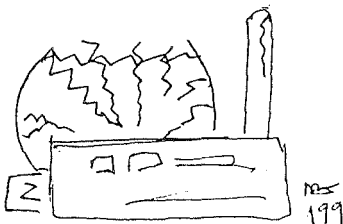
## The Progressive Librarian

The Progressive Librarians Guild (PLG) is a new US radical library organisation whose members are often critical of the American Library Association (ALA) and its policies. We have been sent issues of the PLG journal, the "Progressive Librarian". The second issue contains articles well worth reading such as 'Libraries and the commercialization of information', a good bibliography on the "suppression of information under Israeli rule" (in the occupied territories), and a background piece on the Progressive Librarians Council which flourished in the USA during the 1940s.

The most important article in the issue concerns libraries in South Africa. The article is very critical of the South African Institute of Library and Information Science (SAILIS) which is still enacting a policy of apartheid despite recent developments in the country. The PLG only recognises the independent Library and Information Workers Organisation (LIWO) (see AIR 5 for information on LIWO), and is calling upon the ALA to do the same. I, for one, would be very pleased if the Library Association (LA) in this country did the same! (LA members please take note).

The contact address for the Progressive Librarian is:  
c/o Empire State College-SUNY School of Labor Studies Library, 330 West 42nd Street, 4th floor New York, NY 10036.  
Tel: (212) 279-7380 or (212) 865-6925.  
A subscription costs \$15 for individuals, \$30 for institutions.  
Make cheques out to Elaine Harger.

Martyn Lowe



## Chernobyl

Medical data on more than 670,000 people affected by Chernobyl was destroyed by teenage thieves. Four years work has been lost. In the meantime and in the absence of the conclusions that the data could have provided a report has come out which has downgraded the radiation effects of Chernobyl.

Declan McHugh

The 'SMART' Gulf war has ended (temporarily?) but the Middle East is still the powder keg of frustrations overlaid with weaponry it was before August 2nd 1990. It is just that the frustrations and the weapons have been redistributed. One lesson for us all is that we need to become much better informed about crisis areas before wars begin and the CNN TV crews start reporting back. By then it's too late to have any input which can prevent war.

In the case of the Middle East we need to better understand the conditions in the region that have led to recent events: the history, culture, politics, economics.

With this in mind here are some National libraries (all in London unfortunately) that have Middle East collections:

1) The India Office Library and Records.  
197 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NG.  
Telephone: 071 928 9531.

2) Commonwealth Institute Library and Resource Centre.  
Kensington High Street, London W8 6NQ.  
Telephone: 071 602 3252 extension 14.

3) School of Oriental and African Studies Library. (Enquire before visiting - open to the public by permission).  
Malet Street, London WC1E 7HP.  
Telephone: 071 637 2388.

4) Royal Commonwealth Society Library.  
(Open to the public by special arrangement only).  
Northumberland Avenue, London WC2N 5BJ.  
Telephone: 071 930 6733.  
(Note - photographic collection as well as books).

5) BRITISH LIBRARY REFERENCE DIVISION  
(Open to those requiring material not conveniently available in other libraries)

Department of Printed Books and Manuscripts.  
Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG.  
Department of Oriental Manuscripts and Printed Books.  
Store Street, London WC1E 7DG.  
Telephone: 071-636 1544.

The British Library is the national reference library for all non-scientific subjects and has all books on all such subjects printed in this country.

## Middle East

## Resources

# MUSEUMS

the Quakers are one organisation who had the foresight and resources to set up a Middle East Section years ago. Other organisations such as CND, the Medical Campaign against Nuclear Weapons, CAAT and the National Peace Council have collected materials and/or produced briefings in the last year specifically on Middle East issues.

**Quaker Peace & Service (QPS)**  
Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1.  
Telephone: 071 387 3601.

**Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND)**  
162 Holloway Road, London N7 8DQ.  
Telephone: 071 700 2393.

Information Office materials: 1) "Fuelling the Fires - the Arms Trade and the Middle East" by Declan McHugh, March 1991. 2) "The Gulf Crisis - Matters Arising" by John Grounds & Declan McHugh, March 1991. 3) "Gulf War - Facts and Figures" CND Information Office, March 1991. 4) "The UN and Regional Security" by John Grounds, November 1990. 5) "Iraq and Nuclear Proliferation" CND Information Office, September 1990. 6) "Gulf Crisis Information Pack" CND information Office, January 1991.

**Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons (MCANW)**  
601 Holloway Road, London N19.  
Telephone: 071 272 2020.

"The Human Cost of the Gulf War" by Ian Lee, Medical Educational Trust (MET), June 1991.

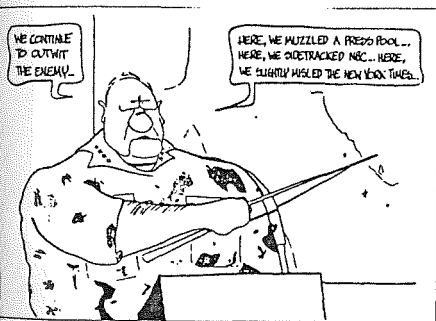
**Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT)**  
11 Goodwin Street, Finsbury Park, London N4 3HQ.  
Telephone: 071 281 0297.

"Arming Saddam" written by the CAAT workers is an excellent compilation of the known dealings of arms and technology by the UK to Saddam.

**National Peace Council (NPC)**  
88 Islington High Street, London N1 8EG.  
Telephone: 071 354 5200.

The National Peace Council Mailing provided a valuable service during the continuing crisis by updating readers on the various anti-war analyses, events and activities of British peace organisations. The March/April 1991 issue, for example, featured articles in which knowledgeable individuals examined the aftermath of the war: "Forgotten Victims", "Effects on women in Britain", "The role of the UN", "Paying for the war" and "Effects on the Media".

The NPC also provided the impetus for the Gulf Crisis Working Group, which brought together key people from the British peace



21

RESOURCES

1) "Research Guide to Current Military and Strategic Affairs" by William M. Arkin, Institute for Policy Studies, 1981.

Although ten years old, since it is a guide to reference works such as yearbooks, dictionaries, major periodicals, bibliographies etc very many of which remain relevant, this work still has considerable value. Indeed I would describe it as indispensable for anyone attempting to get a grasp of the literature pertaining to United States military affairs, which it deals with primarily.

Arkin, who is one of the world's foremost researchers into nuclear matters, deals in turn with 'General Information Sources', 'US Government Documents and Information', 'The US Military' and 'Worldwide Military and Strategic Affairs'. This last section only has a couple of pages for Britain so it is not very useful in that respect. This is a work for the serious researcher for whom it can save many hours of work.

2) "War and Conflict: Selected images from the National Archives 1765-1970". Editor Jonathan Heller, National Archives & records Administration, 1990. 365pp.

Contains 1500+ illustrations and photographs. Again, this is an American book. I haven't seen it, but thought it worth noting.

3) "Retiring from the Military" by Captain K.C Jacobsen, US Navy (Retired), Institute of Naval Proceedings, 1990.

This is the "very first career-changing guide tailored to men and women in the military". We at AIR wish it all the luck in the world and hope it becomes a best-seller. It is a good sign when such books are produced. We shouldn't forget, as activists in, or sympathisers with, the peace movement, that not all members of the military are gung ho or remain so. We should support (as At Ease do) those who wish to make a change, and do more work ourselves on alternative employment for those who want to leave the military.

Declan McHugh



# MUSEUMS

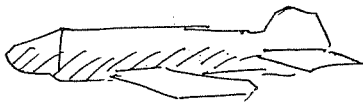
## Peace Museum

Michael Irwin spoke on the subject of the projected National Peace Museum at the National Conference of Peace, One World and Environment Centres in Brighton in June 1991. Michael has had to give up the role of co-ordinator of the working group (of which I am a member), but Peter Van den Dungen of Bradford University Department of Peace Studies has agreed to take it on. Peter has been actively encouraging such a museum for some years. He can be contacted at the Department on this subject. The telephone number is 0274-733466 (extension 260)

## Imperial War Museum

The Imperial War Museum has been gathering materials for a Gulf War exhibition. Items will include gas-masks, guns and the like but the Museum has also been in touch with at least one peace organisation (War Resisters International) for badges, leaflets and other proof of the existence and activities of the anti-Gulf war movement in Britain. Indeed, the Imperial War Museum should be sent such materials as a matter of course - at least that way both sides of the story may have a chance to be represented at their exhibitions and in the archives.

It would be a mistake to regard the Museum as just about war propaganda; it also makes at least an attempt at times to show the horrific consequences of war. The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) has had press launches at the Museum in the past, and the Museum is presently advertising prominently its exhibition on conscientious objection during the Second World War. The poster makes clear that conscientious objection was far from an easy option since those refusing to fight were subjected to ostracisation, imprisonment, abuse and even attack. This helps counters the idea that such objectors were/are 'cowards'. Interestingly, I found out at Library School from a tutor who had himself been an objector that a number of well known librarians had been conscientious objectors.

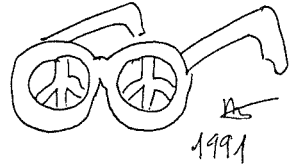


ye olde NuKiller  
Weapon - circa 1991  
- Extinct.

1991.

# FOCUS

'FOCUS', the world's first daily talking newspaper for the print-denied community was launched in 1989 by Gateshead council's libraries and arts department. More than 400 people in Gateshead near Newcastle receive it, and it is now to be launched nationally if a pilot scheme funded by the Public Libraries Development Initiative Scheme is successful. There are 200,000 registered blind and partially sighted in England alone and far more print-denied when the dyslexic, illiterate, stroke victims, and people with diseases like chronic arthritis are taken into account.



Focus is unique in a number of ways. Half of the 16-member news and editorial team are disabled themselves and Focus's editor is blind. Although there are more than 500 local newstapes around the country, Focus staff write and record their own material. Each daily tape is up to 60 minutes long. The A-side has local, national and international news and sport, with coverage and analysis far more in-depth than radio news, while the B-side has 'articles' on the arts, history, health, cookery, etc.

Declan McHugh

(original longer article in the Independent, 11/4/1991)

## Thought for the issue

Ex-Peace News editor, Theodore Roszak wrote a book called "The Cult of Information" in which he described the condition 'data glut' as follows:

"It is a strategy of social control, deliberately and often expertly wielded. It is one of the main ways in which modern governments and interest groups obfuscate issues to their own advantage: they dazzle and distract with more raw data than the citizenry can hope to sort through".

AIR is trying to play a part in guiding people through this maze so that they can find the information they need in their efforts to create a more peaceful world.

Declan McHugh



The Vatican Library has the world's largest collection of books on sex in the world - 25,400 at the last count. (Daily Mirror, 15/4/1991)

In 1939 two nuclear scientists escaped from France bringing with them the world's entire supply of 'heavy water' (a top-secret substance used in the making of the atom bomb), and the 26 cans of this substance were for some curious reason put in the charge of the librarian of Windsor Castle. (From "Secret passages and hiding places" by Jeremy Errand and David Charles, 1974, p187).

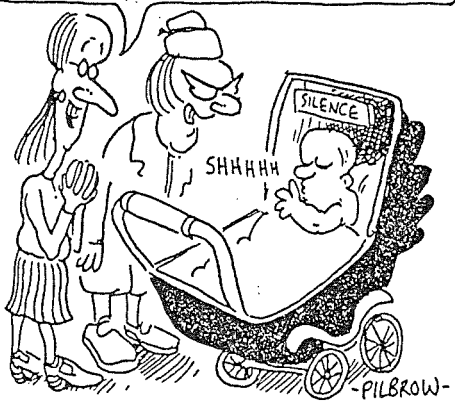
One reference librarian who had devoted her life to answering any and all questions, trivial and weighty, would be more use in Heaven than another cohort of arrogant angels. There must be plenty of such ladies in Heaven, as it takes a saintly disposition and the patience of Job to be a reference librarian and to stick with it for forty years. (From "Job: a Comedy of Justice" by Robert A. Heinlein, New English Library, 1984)

CAREERS CORNER *Guardian June 19 1991*

A WEEKLY guide to identifying the career to which you are best suited at an early age.

Number 3 - LIBRARIAN

SHE'S JUST REFUSED TO SAY HER FIRST WORDS



LIBRARIES TOLD NOT TO BAR HOMELESS  
Libraries may not bar homeless people just because they loiter or smell bad because such a ban violates their First Amendment rights, a federal judge has ruled. Judge H. Lee Sarokin said: "If we wish to shield our eyes and noses from the homeless, we should revoke their condition, not their library cards". (International Herald Tribune, 23/5/1991)

We mentioned Joseph Grant's 'Incredible Librarian' in AIR 5. Now she is back and gracing our front page. Incredible Librarian Sweat shirts, T-shirts, Mugs and Posters - and soon the comic books themselves - are available from Joseph at Box 25544-Library Lane, Tempe, AZ 85285, USA. We can vouch for them!

## MISCELLANEOUS BOX

Librarians Within the Peace Movement, set up by the AIR team to represent ourselves and the loose network of librarians, archivists and others who subscribe to AIR and are interested in the issues it covers, is now a member group of Professions for World Disarmament and Development (PWDD).

## It Figures

For 10 days world military spending the annual cost of the global UN program for sufficient and clean water (\$30 billion) could be provided.

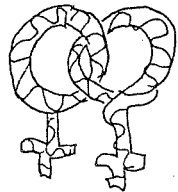
Declan McHugh (statistic from the International Peace Bureau (IPB)).

### At Ease

At Ease is a small group run entirely by volunteers offering free advice to members of the armed forces who want to talk to an independent person. Weekly counselling sessions are held for those who are seeking discharge from service or who feel victimised in some way eg by regulations about length of service, or because they are encountering prejudice about homosexuality, race, etc.

Counsellors tend to have military, social work or clergy backgrounds, but the important thing is a sympathetic listening manner. More counsellors are needed.

Declan McHugh



The Lesbian Archive and Information Centre (LAIC) was left without funding after the London Boroughs Grants Unit withdrew funding. LAIC can be contacted at Wesley House, 4 Wild Ct, London WC2 5AU.

Declan McHugh.

AIR 6 written by named contributors; edited by Declan McHugh; typed by Declan McHugh and Helen Thomas, and produced by Helen Thomas, Martyn Lowe and Declan McHugh.

All contributions welcomed, whether written pieces or good original graphics that suit AIR's themes. Unless otherwise indicated please reprint any article from AIR; the only thing we ask is to be credited and sent a copy of what you have produced.

All correspondence to AIR should be addressed to:

Librarians Within the Peace Movement,  
c/o 6 Endsleigh Street,  
London WC1